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other specialists can be alerted as to the condition of the patient. The radio also allows the ambulance attendant to receive instructions from the doctor if necessary.

As a member of the hospital staff, the ambulance attendant follows through by staying with the patient in the emergency room, providing assistance if needed. He may also be responsible for taking the patient to his hospital room, thereby achieving desirable patient carry-through.

The advantages are evident and abundant. Not only is the hospital-based service more economically feasible because of the increased productivity of the attendant; more importantly, it uses a man who can be given extensive first aid instruction and who is constantly learning more about medical treatment as he works in a patient-oriented atmosphere. As Shook summarizes it: "Constructive criticism and helpful suggestions from the medical staff reduce the possibility of tragic mistakes when the orderly must function as an ambulance attendant under emergency conditions . . . the ambulance-orderly's everyday work experience is a continuous training ground and constant refresher course in patient care. The carry-over to ambulance service provides a degree of sophistication not found in other types of ambulance operation."[5]

The greater productivity means the hospital should be able to pay an ambulance-orderly more than other types of ambulance services have been able to afford. And as a hospital employee, the ambulance-orderly would receive fringe benefits and would enjoy job security with job satisfaction as an important member of a medical team. The rapport with the medical staff would be higher than would be expected with a private or public ambulance operation.

Shook advocates adoption of the ambulance-orderly concept particularly in communities that face a loss of ambulance service because of the withdrawal of private operations. He predicts that the hospital-based service will succeed in any size hospital, but "the important thing is that we know it will work in rural areas which are so desperately in need of quality service."[6]

The crisis proportions of the emergency medical service problem demand action. It is an obligation that must be faced by those capable of helping solve the problem. Shook recommends that hospital administrators consider it their moral obligation to extend hospital emergency care onto the highways and into the homes of the public. Hospital-based ambulance service would be a fulfillment of that obligation. □

5. Ibid., page 9.

6. Shook, "A Study of Iowa Ambulance Service," page 46.